

York University Evaluation 2020 - Summary

Strengths

Project achieved its intended service level outcomes.

NHP seen as experts - safe pair of hands - vital for reassuring LAs when bringing in third sector org. As coordinating hub brought; consistent expert leadership, creativity, freedom to drive innovation and collective identity and credibility.

Multi-agency working offered a holistic and coordinated support package for young people and advice and training for LHP staff.

Framework and not a model meant LAs had flexibility to adopt the HP approach and adapt it to meet their local circumstances.

Every component of the approach founded on **centrality of relationships** with young people, peers, workers, communities and the NHP.

A dedicated and multi-disciplinary LHP team with strengths in relationship-based and **psychologically informed** approaches critical to project effectiveness.

Membership approach for LHPs through COP provided opportunities for knowledge exchange, peer support, training, and best practice consistency.

Innovative **HP groupwork and co-production** approaches promoted young people's active engagement to design services that work with them and for them. Develops capacity/skills to communicate and enables them to take ownership/responsibility, build relationships and constructively repair relationships if they go wrong which is important for independent living.

CLNM and local meetings enabled a strong co-production approach, providing opportunities to work together and contribute to HP development and promotion.

High levels of satisfaction with accommodation and no evidence of evictions or homelessness, suggesting **stability** in the early months post-care despite experiences of considerable instability whilst in care.

Positive **ROI** of 2 from year 3; indicating potential saving of £2 for £1 Invested.

HPP brought evidence informed approaches and consistency to the HP offer and were co-produced with NHP/LHP/staff/young people.

Increase in friendships, social skills and confidence, ability to make up their own mind and significant change in satisfaction with life as a whole, suggesting **improved overall wellbeing**.

Young people positive about supportive nature of the HP community #HPFAM – relationships sustained over years in Stoke between staff/fellow young people.

HP approach reflects 'best practice' - stimulating development across their (LA) respective service.

"It's given me a great life and great opportunities." - Young person

Areas for development

Commitment from **multi-agency partners** (housing, health, virtual school) prior to set-up essential. (A requirement for new LHPs). HP approach highlighted gaps in general provision of housing/psychological support for care leavers.

Housing providers need groundwork from corporate parent to set in motion legal processes/role as guarantor/equitable tenancy agreements. Some young people waited nine months for a property - lack of housing/readiness to move. Need contingency plans.

Local **psychologists** with expertise in trauma informed practice proved a challenge. Lengthy commissioning results in delay of psychological input.

It is vital that LHPs adhere to the core principles of the House Project (**fidelity**).

Relationship-based work relies on **consistent allocated worker** with relevant skills/access to training/security in their role. Short term contracts and uncertainties about continuation, impacted on staff recruitment and retention.

In minority of cases, young people experienced an unexpected **reduction in support** after moving in - "I've not had no visit to me off the HP in months."

Focused work needs to be done by LHP staff to **raise awareness** among frontline workers.

HP approach and support offered described as "platinum standard" within the leaving care offer- questioned the **equity of support** for all care leavers.

Little evidence of improved **ETE** - NEET doubled. ASDAN was not popular - sessions weren't great "too much like a qualification" replaced with HPP. NEET young people over time appeared to reflect school and college courses coming to an end and for some, the end of compulsory education during the follow-up period.

Some said problems raised had not been dealt with - **not being listened to** - others wanted more planning and notice of when meetings were to be held.

Some found sessions too basic - too much emphasis on socialising - not enough **practical help** from facilitators - wanted refresher sessions at time of move-in.

In most cases, **results were not statistically significant** (possibly due to small sample size/variable duration of the intervention/difficulties in gathering sufficient data for a viable comparison group).

Evaluation limited to findings on **early impact and outcomes of the HP support** and accommodation experiences for some young people and on the pre-move support only for around half of the group.

No statistically significant change in number/level of **risk** over time for group
Reduction in the level of some - overall reduction in missing/ harm to others.

Learning

Due to delay/issues with Warwickshire the Evaluation (May 18-Dec 19) focused on 1st cohort in each of five LAs - does not reflect learning in those LA's for subsequent cohorts or how it contributed to establishment of new ways of working for subsequent projects. Some learning/changes already embedded.

Warwickshire lead meant five LAs not clear at outset – development and **focus on fidelity** means NHP clearer and this helps LAs - inclusion in membership agreements; groupwork approach/monthly access to psychology/a base/stakeholders at steering groups /social work supervision if not social work qualified. Offer of stakeholder events and self-assessment considers LA readiness to support LHP.

A significant challenge is **securing housing**. Need pre-existing agreements in place committing a set number of properties. Now done in advance of set up.

Availability and quality of **psychological support** to LHPs addressed by central contracts and new membership agreements.

HPP developed over time and structure for practice framework – accreditation created emphasis on tasks for learning rather than the experience and social development. Currently being reviewed in terms of language/branding/delivery.

Ensuring quality with projects at distance is a challenge. Need to observe – share practice written into membership agreements. Reflection that practice lead and HPP development are one and same. Need to **increase capacity for practice lead** to be able to support. Recruit additional post.

Communication between CLNM and LHP groups/NHP needed to be strengthened. Addressed by recruitment to permanent position. Challenged by Pandemic. More work to do with CLNM and with LHPs.

Staffing levels. Stoke on 6th cohort - same staff, evaluation positive about outcomes. Quality staff, experience of direct work and groupwork work combined with development of community support means demand is met. Staff unlikely to increase – focus on quality. Involved in recruitment. Ensure quality of induction/training.

Performance framework with data that is useful and with systems that connect vital to developing approach, measuring what we do and being able to explain NHP business. To review performance framework.

Focus on enhanced offer and 'us and them' being positively used to drive standards. LAs looking as to how can **scale internally**. Exploring options.

Experience/awareness/confidence means **increased referrals** with cohort of young people with more challenges.

ROI 1.6 in year 2 and 2 in in year 3. Doesn't equate with what we see. Explore options of case study- independent management consultant to provide fiscal case.